

The Book of Novicia, Chapter Twelve

INVOCATION / EVOCATION

We begin this lesson with a definition of our terms.

Invocation

- 1.) The call or prayer to a deity for help, support, to perform a particular action, or to appear.
- 2.) An act of conjuring.
- 3.) An invitation to a deity to temporarily share the body of a witch.
- 4.) Inviting a god into the Magick Circle drawn within a sacred triangle.

Evocation

The summoning of a lower spirit or spirits, elementals or other entities; specifically into the area of a sacred triangle that exists outside the Magick Circle within that triangle. (As opposed to invocation which is reserved for higher level entities such as gods.)

Definitions from *The Witches' Dictionary*
By Victoria David Danann

Let's look at these meanings one by one.

INVOCATION:

1.) *The call or prayer to a deity for help, support, to perform a particular action, or to appear.* Certainly the first definition under "Invocation" is the one with which we're most familiar. Public gatherings, ceremonies and sports events of an entirely secular nature often commence with an invocation armed with an assumption that, first, there is a god, second, there is only one god, and third, everyone present agrees on the first two premises. When performed in this half-hearted way, it is a harmless (and useless) activity. It will not cause frogs to rain down on your enemies, but it will not help your team win either.

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You've heard those stories about blind research studies¹ that supposedly prove that prayer groups improved the health of select patients? But, have you also heard the results of studies that prove the opposite? -- that the group of patients who were told hundreds of people were praying for them actually grew worse.

This aspect of invocation is one we will explore in this lesson.

2.) Invocation as an *act of conjuring*. This is an amusing definition because, if you look up "conjuring" you are told that it means to summon a devil or spirit by invocation or incantation b: to practice magical arts. So, basically, to invoke is to conjure. To conjure is to invoke. Fortunately you have a sense of what it means notwithstanding formal definitions. We will not pursue conjuring in this lesson and caution against experimenting with these Magicks at this point. We will talk about this again in third year.

3.) Invocation as *an invitation to a deity to temporarily share the body of a witch*. **We will not pursue conjuring in this lesson and caution against experimenting with these Magicks at this point.** Please don't be lulled into over-confidence by all the resources that make this process seem like it's no big deal. It isn't a big deal if you're play-acting² which is the norm for this event, but, it's quite serious if you attempt to accomplish this in earnest. It requires a high level of education and control because deities are known to be both temperamental and unpredictable. Plus, if you leave a gap in your phrasing, you could end up with something other than a benign deity who wants to visit just until your temperature is critical and then vacate. I don't want to scare you, but there are many things that might choose to masquerade as helpful gods that would love to have access

¹. Always question research findings in the social sciences. Research data is easily manipulated to "prove" the outcome you desire. In my senior year in college I was research assistant to a well-known sports psychologist. It was a job usually reserved for graduate students, but I was the only one in the department who could figure out how to utilize the new (at that time) computer technology, so I got the job. She taught me a lot about margins of error, about how easily results could be nudged one way or another and about how tempting it might be to make the data conform to the conclusion you postulated at the beginning of the study and were thereby hoping to prove.

². Play-acting. There's nothing wrong with this. Pagans have been doing Ceremonial pretending for thousands of years.

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to your body (as you will learn when we study psychic self-defense). Preparations must be meticulously made and it is one of the few things that you really can't do as a solitary. You must have a darn good reason for undertaking something so risky. You must also have a fully qualified partner that you can trust to have your best interest at heart.

4.) Invocation as *inviting a god into the Magick Circle drawn within a sacred triangle*. This aspect of invocation is one we will explore in this lesson.

EVOCATION:

The summoning of a lower spirit or spirits, elementals or other entities. You were introduced to calling elementals in a previous lesson on the subject of the four ancient elements. In this lesson, we will explore a little further.

Both topics are launched from an assumption that you believe that there are creatures, spirits and/or entities that are not catalogued in the Encyclopedia Britannica. This is the one of the junctures where the well-worn path presents you with less traveled choices. In a moment we will step off the mainstream path together to begin our discussion of the paranormal other.

First, let me say now should I forget later, that **I will never ask you to do anything that makes you feel frightened, anxious or threatened in any way.** In fact, I think you should stay in close contact with your feelings and pay attention to any reaction that signals discomfort. From the first lesson, you have been urged toward self-discovery, self-assessment and self-reflection. One of the tasks you must perform while in the body you're now using is to learn everything you can about yourself. If you cast or weave Magick as a master, you must eventually be able to account for all variables including personal characteristics that might intermingle or interfere with your results.

CHECKPOINT: If you've been doing your job, you should be able to tell me what things about you are genetically inherited, what things are the direct result of experience, what things have been learned and what things can't be explained in any of these three ways. The things that can't be explained by genetic predisposition, experience or education are usually hard-won lessons from previous life experience.

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A second reason for becoming intimately acquainted with yourself – the good, the bad, et al, is so you will listen to your intuition, or inner voice, with confidence; that means hearing and following the advice.

A third reason is because, when you can identify the origination of a personal view or characteristic you find undesirable, you can use that information to change that thing about yourself should you wish to do so. Tracing the source is like shining a light in a dark corner. When you remove the mystery, you remove the power it has over you.

Should you ever feel a resistance to performing a particular lesson task, you should pay attention and postpone execution until you feel ready. For me, better safe than sorry, means there could be a good reason why you are hesitant to venture into a particular area of Magick. Err on the side of caution.

Back to encounters with other life forms. **This is not a lesson in existentialism. Or is it?**

What are they? Where are they? And why aren't they readily apparent to everyone including scientists?

No one knows. Many people will pretend to know, but I made a vow to be honest with you and that's why I'm going to tell you that the following is what I think. I will not go into all the twists, turns, adventures and sometimes silly dead-ends that have led me to these conclusions. You, of course, are entitled to your own conclusions and, if you're as smart as I think you are, your own tapestry will be ever-changing, flexible enough to incorporate new evidence when available.

Many people in the West became familiar with the model of "planes" to explain existence in forms other than what we think of as reality when Asian mysticism was interjected into the discussion of spirituality. This is a formal recognition that there are modes of being operating at vastly different rates of vibration such that they may occupy the same physical space without being aware of each other. The concept is abstract because it has yet to be proven and is foreign to the concerns of most people.

For me, the model of multiple dimensions works better than "planes" and, in fact, there

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are some rogue scientists who are beginning to postulate the likelihood of six dimensions. I think there are seven, but let's not quibble for now. Remember, I have said that science and Magick have been on a convergent trajectory for centuries. It is only a matter of time until intersection of what we, as Witches or Magicians, believe and what can be proven scientifically.

For the sake of argument, let's say that there are seven dimensions. We occupy one of the in-between states meaning that we vibrate at a higher rate than some and not as high as others. I believe that, when it comes to paranormal others, we are talking about two distinctly different phenomena.

1. **The first group are beings who are able to travel interdimensionally by deliberately altering their rate of vibration to match that of another reality.** This would include the original essences of consciousness, The Lords of the Flame, who bear a resemblance to archangels. We will do a complete lesson on The Lords of the Flame, the history of the mythical, the mystical and the Magick in second year.

Some of the creatures of fairy tales and legends are part of this group. One example would be dragons. For a supposedly mythical creature, they feel more familiar to us than many species on display at your local zoo. Perhaps in the recent past of racial memory, dragons would come and go at will. I do know that all myth has some basis in fact.

These creatures can enter our dimension through various gateways including but not limited to the intersections of ley lines, reflective surfaces and sacred Circles drawn for the purpose of summoning.

2. **The second group are beings that are innately amoral, formless, malleable material that may be drawn from the ethers and given form and purpose by belief.** I hate to say it because it sounds so rude, but these are, in a sense, fake entities. They cannot and do not exist apart from people's belief in them. They can be confined to a geographical area and assigned powers by the extent of belief. Their limitations are based on the expectations of people who believe. This category would include saints that have been elevated to demigods and a catalog of deities.

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Here is an example: In 1972, I read a novel called The Exorcist that had been published the year before. It was terrifying because, even though I had not previously heard of such events, the idea seemed strangely familiar. A friend happened to joke sarcastically that, "Sure. That happens everyday! People are being possessed by demons right and left. Half my office was out today with it." The remark prompted me to look into whether or not there were many such reports. I found that there was one place in the world, the Ukraine – one of the former U.S.S.R. states – Latvia or Estonia I think, where there was an epidemic outbreak of demon possessions; the sort where people did things people shouldn't be able to do. That's when the idea began to germinate with me that supernatural phenomena may gain strength in direct proportion to the amount and intensity of emotion feeding a belief.

If you wish to invoke the assistance or support of a god, you must first decide which one – what is s/he called, how do they appear, what is their reputed area of specialty – then be prepared to infuse your request with (1.) an offering and (2.) an intense belief that the deity is real and available to you. Whether these deities are called into existence by belief or exist independently is a question for you to decide. I believe that each of us comes complete with the entire pantheon at the disposal of our psyche. The part of you that matches the appeal will accept the flattery and work for your benefit regardless.

In other words, you can make any god into your own image.

A representation, picture or statue, can be helpful to the process of breathing life into your deity of choice. It has also been my observation that people who appeal to deities have better success if they, first, choose a patron/ess to which they can offer a measure of loyalty and devotion, and, second, do not abuse the relationship by overtaxing the deity with requests.

As to the fourth meaning under the general heading of Invocation, calling a deity into your Circle, I have only one thing to say and that is, "Why?" I can't think of one good reason to do this. The only reason I can think of why a person would want to do this is thrill seeking or the desire for a splashy display of power. Either one would be a truly dumb ass reason to end up in assisted living.

EVOCATION:

Finally, here's one you're ready for. I feel much better about the idea of inviting "lower spirits", elementals or entities into the triangle OUTSIDE your Circle. It's fairly easy to avoid getting into trouble if you follow the steps and leave the creature an escape route.

The first thing you need is a reason to do it. If you don't have a good reason, don't do it.

So, what's a good reason? Well, it's always easy to use money as an example because next to health and love, it's what we need to live and often what we need to make our dreams come true as well. Let's say your financial resources need to be expanded. What elemental or "mythical" creatures are closely associated with money. Well, dragons are known for guarding treasures. Gnomes are known for mining and burrowing pathways to money. Leprechauns are known for bestowing windfalls and snatching them away (as typically happens with lottery wins). Does your need closer represent investing for security and the future? If so, the dragon is the influence you seek. If the focus of your need is more about making more money from a business or career, then the influence of a gnome could be just the thing. There's no point in talking about the Leprechaun thing. You might as well go to Vegas.

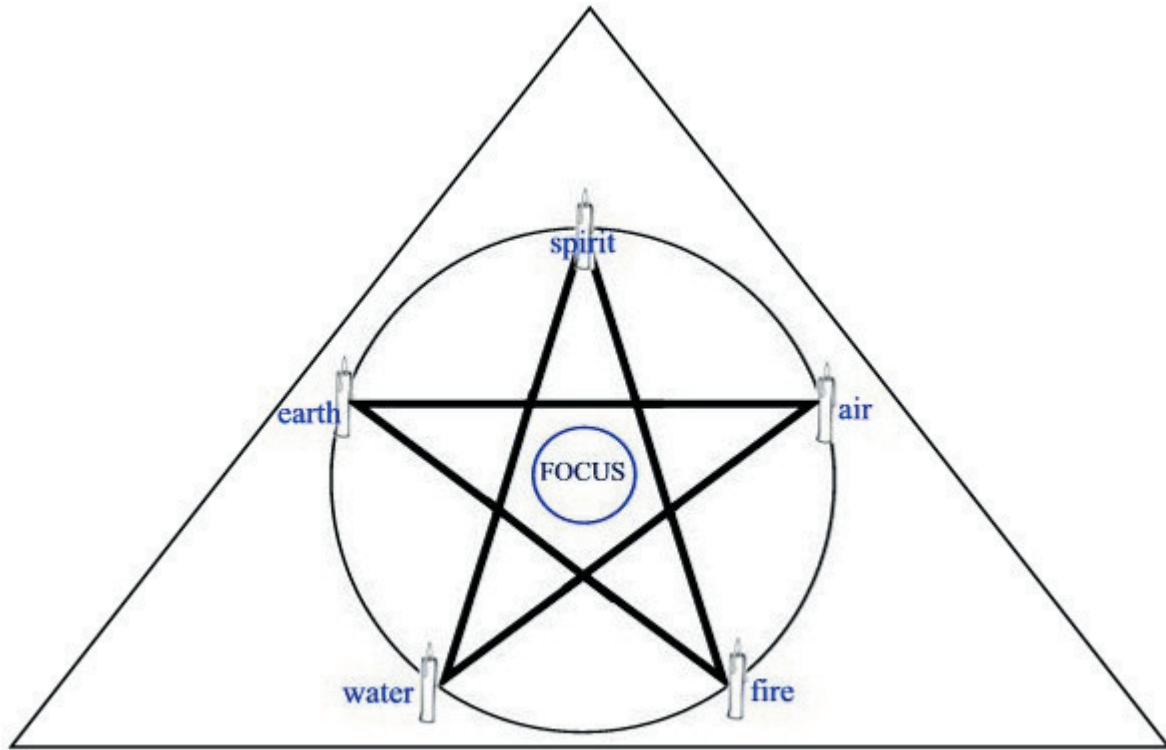
Dragons or gnomes. My guess is that most of you would say you want to make more money. So gnomes it is. You will invite a gnome who is willing to tutor you in sound business practice or finding the vein of "gold" in your career, into the part of the triangle outside your Circle that corresponds with the element Earth. You will need some offering or enticement.

PRINCIPLE: Real Magick isn't free.

Every good thing that enters your life requires the loss of something else. This can serve as the required sacrifice. It's not always painful and is usually what we might call an acceptable loss.

For example, you can't move into your dream house without giving up the starter home you worked to turn into a charming cottage. You will leave behind the work you put into

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you put into that house along with the memories you made there. It's an acceptable loss, but it is a sacrifice.

What might you offer a gnome in exchange for assistance? I would think burning an incense made of herbs known for money-drawing power would be a good start. Mark the triangle that holds your Circle with stones or candles or something obvious. Make it big enough to allow the entity you are calling to enter. If you need to move your furniture back against the walls or move outside, do so.

When you draw the triangle, leave a gap so that the entity can leave when they want. Do not leave a gap in your Circle! Enclose yourself and put up reasonable protections for insurance purposes. When you write out your summons, include a caveat like, "has my best interest at heart" and "when I say go, will depart".

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Remember from the lesson on Elemental Magick that elementals do not have complex personalities as do humans. A gnome would not be able to comprehend (or have patience with) laziness. A dragon would not be able to comprehend (or have patience with) poor money management. And so on.

ASSIGNMENT:

This is a lot of information to process for just one lesson and yet we have just broached the subject. You may need to absorb some of this, mull it over, reread the lesson, make notes to yourself and read again on the way to internalizing this material. You will also likely need to do some independent research to determine the associations, or correspondences, of various elementals or lesser deities.

When you are ready to attempt a purpose-driven Evocation, you are welcome to email your plan or any questions to the SIA staff in advance. If we see any flaws that could create problems, we will tell you in advance. Remember to give us plenty of lead time to answer.

REMEMBER. You put a little in, you get a little out. You put a lot in, you get a lot out.

Don't forget your journaling. The keeping of a Witch's Diary is a big part of the process. No detail is too unimportant to record. Your Chapter Twelve notes will include your thoughts on the subject plus any research you may do in conjunction with preparing for a future evocation.

On the subject of journaling, I received this email from a fellow student and decided to include both comment and response as a postscript to this lesson.

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Dear Victoria -

I'm still just a 'C average' Witch student because with all of the other demands and paperwork I need to do running my business, the priority of keeping my Witch Diary in perfect order...well, it's just not #1 yet. I may need a tutor to help me 'stay the diary course.'

Dear Robert -

I find it delightful that you are concerned about whether your journaling is meticulous enough. That fact alone earns you a higher than average grade.

My constant insistence on the diary is meant to help develop a habit -- one that should be life-long. The day will come when you do not receive regular lessons to encourage your growth and, when you are on your own, the diary will act as your rudder to keep you on course. Someday your diary will be your tutor. You will be able to reread your entries and find patterns of what does work, what doesn't work and what needs further experiment or investigation.

This is the time for forming good habits. You may regret not keeping your diary, but the neglect of it may be a regret someday.

I hope you will join us for the last lesson of first year training, Chapter Thirteen on Extra-Dimensional Magick.